



State of Arizona  
Department of Education

Tom Horne  
Superintendent of  
Public Instruction

September 15, 2004

Dear XYZ District Parent:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that XYZ District has been identified for District Improvement. The reason for this identification is that, under the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB), your district/charter holder did not meet “adequate yearly progress” (AYP) for two consecutive years.

AYP is a measure that all states use to determine if schools and districts are meeting the high expectations described in NCLB. The goal, under this system, is that 100% of our students will meet or exceed the Arizona Academic Standards by the 2013-2014 school year. In order to meet that goal, schools and districts must meet certain objectives each year.

Recently, we released a report on AYP for all schools and districts in Arizona. The report gives a simple yes or no grade, based on the percent of students that are meeting or exceeding the Arizona Academic Standards on the AIMS test. In addition, schools and districts must meet a percent tested goal and either an attendance rate or graduation rate goal. The table below shows the AYP determination that your district received.

District AYP Determination	Met Percent Tested?	N
	Met Test Objectives?	N
	Met Attendance Rate?	Y
	Met Graduation Rate?	N/A
	Made AYP?	N

A similar determination was made for all schools within your district. Once the school AYP determinations were calculated, all of the data was then combined to determine the district AYP. The district AYP determination includes students that moved from one school to another within the district, whereas the school determination does not include these mobile students.

Another item to mention is that the data is calculated for all students as well as subgroups of students (i.e., racial and ethnic groups, English language learners, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students). If even one of these groups does not meet their objectives, then the school or district will not have made AYP. (NOTE: Only groups larger than 30 are counted.) When this data is combined at the district level, it is a challenge for the district to make AYP.

You, as a parent, are a very important part of the educational process. In addition to the assistance and nurturing you give to your child, you can participate in upgrading the quality of education within your district. Your efforts will help your school and district to make AYP.

You may want to get involved by:

- Reviewing your child's homework and test results;
- Supporting and reinforcing your child's good study habits;
- Becoming a member of your school's site council;
- Attending board meetings and giving input at appropriate times;
- Serving on a school or district committee; and
- Coming to parent-school meetings on student achievement;

For more information about AYP, please see the attached Frequently Asked Questions page or visit our website at [www.ade.az.gov/azlearns](http://www.ade.az.gov/azlearns) and go to the NCLB link. You can also call your district/charter holder office to find out what they are doing to increase academic achievement at each of their schools.

Sincerely,

Nancy Konitzer  
Deputy Associate Superintendent  
Academic Achievement Division

Dale E. Parcell  
Deputy Associate Superintendent  
School Effectiveness Division

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. What is the No Child Left Behind Act?

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) is a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and was signed into law by President Bush on Jan. 8, 2002. NCLB is the central federal law for elementary and secondary education. The ESEA, which was first enacted in 1965, encompasses Title I, the federal government's primary aid program for disadvantaged students.

### 2. What is Adequate Yearly Progress?

Adequate yearly progress (AYP) is the measure by which schools, districts, and states are held accountable for student performance under Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB).

Here is how AYP works. NCLB requires states to use a single accountability system for all public schools to determine whether students as a whole, as well as subgroups of students (i.e., racial and ethnic groups, English language learners, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students) are making progress toward meeting state academic standards. The law also requires that all students reach a "proficient" level of achievement, as measured by their performance on state tests, by the spring of 2014. In Arizona, students that meet or exceed the standards on the AIMS test are considered "proficient." Along the way, schools, districts, and states must demonstrate that all of their students are making continuous and consistent progress toward meeting that goal in public elementary and secondary schools (not just those schools receiving Title I funds). This interim progress is what is known as adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward the goal of all students reaching academic standards.

According to the law, states have the flexibility to define this yearly progress, but it must include the following elements:

- **Met Percent Tested?** To make AYP, at least 95 percent of students in each of the four subgroups, as well as 95 percent of students in schools and districts as a whole, must take the AIMS test.
- **Met Test Objectives?** To make AYP, the percent of students as a whole, as well as in each of the four subgroups, must meet or exceed the annual measurable objectives set for that year for each subject and grade.
- **Met Attendance Rate?** To make AYP, districts and elementary schools must have an attendance rate of at least 93.5% over the first 100 days of the academic year *or* make at least a 1% gain from the previous year.
- **Met Graduation Rate?** To make AYP, districts and high schools must have a four-year graduation rate of 70.5% and above *or* make at least a 1% gain from the previous year.

### 3. What is District Improvement?

District Improvement is an identification given to a Title I district if they fail to make AYP for two consecutive years. NCLB specifies a number of consequences for those districts that are identified. The first step is to notify parents of students who attend a school in a district in need of improvement and provide assistance to the district identified. Additional sanctions are added if a district identified for improvement continues to fail to make AYP for several years.